CANADA AND THE NAVY.

The Memorandum Prepared by the Board of Admiralty on the General Naval Situation.

(Communicated to the House of Commons of Canada by the Right Hon. R. L. Borden, M.P., Prime Minister, on the occasion of the introduction of a Bill to authorize measures for increasing the effective Naval forces of the Empire.—December 5th, 1912.)

WHAT IT DISCLOSES.

WHICH POLICY SHOULD CANADA ADOPT?

THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY—An immediate gift of $35,000,000 for the three most powerful battleships in the world as part of a permanent policy of contribution, or in addition to some other policy to be announced later.

THE LIBERAL POLICY—A Canadian Naval Service in accordance with the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of March, 1909.

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THE TWO POLICIES.

In a consideration of the Memorandum prepared by the Board of Admiralty on the General Naval Situation, it will be well to keep in mind the following official utterances which have a direct bearing on the means by which it is proposed to deal with the General Naval Situation which the Memorandum discloses.

THE SHARE OF THE DOMINIONS IN IMPERIAL DEFENCE AS OUTLINED BY THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

"If the main development of the past ten years has been the concentration of the British fleet in decisive theatres, it seems to me, and, I dare say, to you, not unlikely that the main development of the next ten years will be the growth of the effective naval forces in the great Dominions overseas. Then we shall be able to make what I think will be found to be the true division of labour between the Mother Country and her daughter states—that we should maintain a sea-supremacy against all-comers at the decisive point, and that they should guard and patrol all the rest of the British Empire."

* * *

"The Admiralty see no reason why arrangement should not be made to give the Dominions a full measure of control over the movements in peace of any naval forces which, with our help, they may bring into efficient existence. We know that in war our Countrymen over the seas will have only one wish, and that will be to encounter the enemy wherever the need and the danger is most severe. The important thing is that the gap shall be filled so that while we, in the Old Country, guard the decisive theatre, our comrades and brothers across the seas shall keep the flag flying on the oceans of the world."

—The Times, London, May 16, 1912. From a speech of the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P., First Lord of the Admiralty, at a banquet of the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights, London, May 15, 1912.

THE CONSERVATIVE POLICY—AS OUTLINED BY THE RT. HON. R. L. BORDEN.

"They will be the three most powerful battleships in the world."

* * *

"Every Canadian will realize, in seeing or reading of these ships, that they are a gift in which he has participated."

* * *

"The total cost of three such battleships, which when launched will be the most powerful in the world, would be approximately $35,000,000 and we ask the people of Canada, through their Parliament, to grant that sum."

"They will be built under Admiralty supervision in the United Kingdom."

* * *

"There have been proposals, to which I shall no more than allude, that we should build up a great Naval organization in Canada. In my humble opinion, nothing of an efficient character could be built up in this country within a quarter or perhaps half a century."

—From the speech of the Rt. Hon. R. L. Borden. Hansard, House of Commons Debates.—Dec. 5, 1912.

THE LIBERAL POLICY—AS OUTLINED BY THE RT. HON. SIR WILFRID LAURIER.

As a result of the armaments which are now going on in Europe, England has been obliged to increase the margin of security which she relies on for her own defence by reducing the Naval forces in the outlying seas. Such is the condition, and I ask once more, what is the remedy? In our humble judgment, the remedy is this, that wherever in the distant seas, or in the distant countries—in Australia, Canada or elsewhere—a British ship has been removed to allow of concentration in European waters, that ship should be replaced by a ship built, maintained, equipped and manned by the young nation immediately concerned.....This is the Australian policy, this ought to be the Canadian policy."

* * *

"The Memorandum which my right Honourable friend submitted the other day disclosed nothing which we did not know before. We discussed it in the month of March, 1909, and then we came to the conclusion, the unanimous conclusion, that the best method of helping England, of discharging our duties, was not by contribution but by the creation of a Canadian Navy."

* * *

"It has been stated, I hope it will prove true,—that this generous contribution of $35,000,000 to the Imperial treasury will create a deep impression in Europe amongst the great powers. I hope it is true, but would not the impression be much greater yet, if, instead of this money contribution, the nations of Europe were to see the young daughters of the Empire, the young nations scattered over the whole world, building fleets of their own,— to use the language of the resolution of 1909—in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial Navy along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference?"

—From the speech by the Rt. Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Hansard, House of Commons Debates.—Dec. 12, 1912.

THE ADMIRALTY MEMORANDUM.

During the introduction in the House of Commons on Dec. 5th, 1912, of his bill to authorize the expenditure of $35,000,000 towards a gift to the British Admiralty of the three most powerful battleships in the world, the Right Honourable R. L. Borden, the Prime Minister, read from a Memorandum prepared by the British Admiralty at Mr. Borden's request on the general Naval situation, which, in answer to a specific question put by Mr. Borden to the Admiralty, concludes by stating that after a prolonged consideration of all the circumstances it is desirable that any immediate aid that Canada might give should include the provision of a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war. This Memorandum is being made to serve the purpose in public discussion of conveying the impression that an emergency exists, and is being interpreted as a request, or an expressed preference, on the part of the British Admiralty, for the presentation by Canada of dreadnoughts to the Mother Country. In point of fact, **the Memorandum contains nothing to justify the view that, in the opinion of the Admiralty, an emergency exists, or that the British Government either desires or expects a contribution of the kind Mr. Borden proposes.** An analysis of the document will show that it carefully avoids all expressions of opinion. The facts, it discloses, however, afford ample grounds for believing that had a free expression of opinion been granted the Home Government as to the best course for Canada to pursue, the opinion expressed would have been in entire accord with the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of Canada of March, 1909, and the present proposals of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal party.

The quotations which follow and which are taken from the Memorandum speak for themselves:—

THE MEMORANDUM LEAVES CHOICE OF METHODS SOLELY TO CANADA.

The Memorandum was not presented by the Admiralty to Mr. Borden, but was prepared by the Admiralty in compliance with a request of Mr. Borden. The letter from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to H.R.H. the Governor-General transmitting the Memorandum is sufficient evidence of this. It is as follows:—

"Downing Street, 25th Oct., 1912."

"Sir:

1. I have the honour to transmit to Your Royal Highness the accompanying copy of a memorandum relating to the requirements of the Naval Defence of the Empire.

"2. *This document has been prepared* by the Admiralty on the instruction of His Majesty's Government *in compliance with the request of Mr. Borden* with a view to presentation to the Dominion Parliament if, and when, the Dominion Ministers deem it necessary.

I have, etc.,
L. HARCOURT."

The first sentence of the Memorandum is also evidence of this. It is as follows:—

"1. *The Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada has invited His Majesty's Government*, through the Board of Admiralty, *to prepare a statement* of the present and immediately prospective requirements of the naval defence of the Empire for presentation to the Canadian Parliament if the Dominion Cabinet deem it necessary."

The Memorandum expressly disclaims any intention to influence public opinion in the matter of the policy to be adopted respecting naval defence, and expressly states that this is a matter for the people of Canada to decide. The last two paragraphs of Section 1 of the Memorandum are as follows:—

"The Admiralty set the greatest store by the important material, and still more important moral, assistance which it is within the power of Canada to give to maintaining British Naval supremacy on the high seas, but they think it necessary to disclaim any intention, however indirect, of putting pressure upon Canadian public opinion, or of seeking to influence the Dominion Parliament in *a decision which clearly belongs solely to Canada.*"

The Admiralty, therefore, confine themselves, in this statement, exclusively to facts, and *it is for the Dominion Government and Parliament to draw their own conclusions therefrom.*

THE MEMORANDUM CONTAINS NO EVIDENCE OF AN EMERGENCY.

There are **ten sections** in the Memorandum altogether.

Section 1 contains the foregoing declarations.

In **Sections 2 to 4** inclusive, it is pointed out that the power of the British Empire is to be measured by reference to other naval forces, and that the development of the German fleet during the last fifteen years is the most striking feature of the naval situation. The extent of the present and possible growth of the German navy is set forth in detail. Paragraph four concludes: "*The facts set forth above were laid before the House of Commons on the 22nd July, 1912, by the First Lord of the Admiralty.*"

There is, therefore, nothing in the Memorandum respecting the German situation which has not already been given to the British public and the world, and which was not before the British Parliament at the time the naval estimates were under discussion and Mr. Borden and his colleagues were in England. **With these facts before them, the British Government saw no existence of an emergency. Why, therefore, should the Canadian Government draw inference of any such existing?** The statement of British Ministers made in the debates when these facts were laid before the British Parliament are significant, and should be read in Canada when considering the inference to be drawn from the Memorandum.

Section 5 sets forth the effect of the new German Law in producing a remarkable expansion of strength and readiness, all of which information has been before the British Parliament and the public ever since the Law was passed.

Section 6 directly disproves the existence of an emergency by pointing out, in the plainest manner, the superior strength of British ships over German in home waters as far ahead as 1915. The Memorandum says:

"It is now necessary to look forward to the situation in 1915.

IN HOME WATERS.

"In the spring of the year 1915:—

"Great Britain will have 25 'Dreadnought' battleships and 2 'Lord Nelsons.'

"Germany will have 17 'Dreadnought' battleships.

"Great Britain will have 6 battle cruisers.

"Germany will have 6 battle cruisers."

THE MEMORANDUM DISCLOSES NEED FOR FLEET UNITS.

Section 6 is divided into three parts, (one) HOME WATERS, (two) MEDITERRANEAN STATION, (three) OVERSEAS.

The part relating to the Overseas is **one of the strongest of arguments for the establishment of local fleet units. It is as** follows:—

"It has been necessary within the past decade to concentrate the fleet mainly in Home waters.

"In 1902, there were 160 British vessels on the overseas stations against 76 to-day."

In this connection, it may be well to consider what the Right Honourable Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, said on this subject at the time the British Government was looking forward to Mr. Borden's visit to England; many months after the Laurier administration had been defeated. The London Times of May 16 gives an account of a speech delivered by Mr. Churchill at a dinner of the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights on May 15th. The Times' article is headed:—

"AN EMPIRE NAVY.

"THE COLONIES' SHARE IN IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

"MR. CHURCHILL ON THE DIVISION OF DUTIES."

The account given is verbatim, and as it refers to the approaching visit of Mr. Borden and his colleagues to England "*to consult with the Government and the Admiralty upon the course of policy which should be adopted in the future*" may be regarded as giving **the true expression of opinion of the British Government on the best policy for Canada to adopt.** It is an expression of opinion freed from all Canadian party influence. The views it expresses cannot be attributed to either Sir Wilfrid Laurier or Mr. Borden. Sir Wilfrid was out of office, and Mr. Borden had not yet decided upon any policy. It is therefore an unprejudiced expression of opinion by the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. Churchill is reported in the Times as follows:—

"Another subject I would refer to. The British fleets are now practically concentrated. The recent great review before the King is only one proof of the quality of concentration which the Admiralty has lately brought to its final act—a policy of naval concentration which has given a real measure of security to the centre and heart of the British Empire. But there is one aspect of naval concentration which requires the attention of thinking men here and elsewhere throughout the British Empire. The fact that our fleet has not only concentrated in the decisive theatre of European waters, but must be kept concentrated and in a certain sense tied to that theatre has been for some years creating a new want, a new need, a new opportunity for the great self-governing Dominions of the Crown. Naval supremacy consists in our being in possession of naval forces sufficient to overcome in war the strongest fleet or fleets which any reasonably probable combination of powers may bring against us. That we should be always in a position to do. That we believe ourselves to be now and in the immediate future in a position to do. But a war may go on for a long time before a decision is obtained or gained and this is the more likely of the two contingencies—if we act, as we shall do, with discretion, with sobriety, with simplicity, with goodwill to all nations and rancour and prejudice against none, it is much more likely, I say it with sincere conviction,—that war will never come in our time, and perhaps will have passed from the world, at any rate for periods which our most adventurous imagination enables us to foresee. Meanwhile, and pending a decision in the critical theatres, there is no doubt that the general mobility of our fleet is reduced. It cannot move safely and freely to every part of the world to the same extent as in former years. At present, of course, and for some years to come, we are not only able to maintain a sufficient margin within home waters at the decisive points, but we could, by making special arrangements, by effecting partial mobilization we could, if the need arose, fit out and despatch strong squadrons to the aid of any of our colonies or dominions across the sea whose vital interests were menaced or attacked.

"That is the duty which we are able to discharge, and which we are proud to discharge—a duty which we should not hesitate to run the risk of discharging, which we should not hesitate to make sacrifices for—the protection of our great self-governing dominions. And when I speak of this I mean not only by a general supremacy which operates simultaneously and universally at every portion of the globe, but by the despatch, if necessary, of particular squadrons to any point or any part of the British Empire where special danger might menace our fellow-countrymen. That we can do now, next year, and in the years which are immediately before us.

"Still here we are, gathered together, a company of practical shipwrights, accustomed to deal with real and great facts, we must face them and we must recognize them, for with every new development in continental navies, with every fresh squadron which takes water abroad, with every fresh step in the ceaseless accumulation of naval strength with which we are confronted, the world-wide mobility of the British Navy becomes restricted.

"And here is the great opportunity, the great chance of the self-governing dominions, those strong young nations which have grown up all over the world, under the shelter of the British Flag and by the stimulus and protection of British institutions. And they have already begun to seize it. Already we have seen the development in Australia of a strong modern fleet unit. New Zealand has contributed a noble ship to the general services of the British Navy.

"And in Canada men of all parties and of both races are deeply stirred upon the problem and of the share which the great Dominion should take in the means by which it and all the other parts of the British Empire are kept from harm. And we are soon to receive, I understand, representatives of the new Canadian Administration, who will come over here to consult with the Government and the Admiralty upon the course of policy which should be adopted in the future.

"If the main development of the past ten years has been the concentration of the British fleet in decisive theatres, it seems to me, and, I dare say to you, not unlikely that the main naval development of the next ten years will be the growth of the effective naval forces in the great Dominions overseas. Then we shall be able to make what I think will be found to be the true division of labour between the Mother Country and her daughter states—that we should maintain a sea-supremacy against all-comers at the decisive point, and that they should guard and patrol all the rest of the British Empire.

"I am certainly not going to attempt to forecast or to prescribe the exact form which these developments should take. But the march of opinion appears to be proceeding along thoroughly practicable lines.

"This, however, I will venture to say. The Admiralty see no reason why arrangement should not be made to give the Dominions a full measure of control over the movements in peace of any naval forces which, with our help, they may bring into efficient existence. We know that in war our Countrymen over the seas will have only one wish, and that will be to encounter the enemy wherever the need and the danger is most severe. The important thing is that the gap shall be filled so that while we, in the Old Country, guard the decisive theatre, our comrades and brothers across the seas shall keep the flag flying on the oceans of the world.

"That is the principle which I have come here to-night to expound, and if the observations which I have ventured to make should contribute in any way to its furtherance, should contribute in any way to the achievement of such a result, then I think we shall be found to have done more to-night for the British Empire and the British Navy than merely respond to the toast which Sir William White has so happily proposed."

A Comparison with the Liberal Policy.

Could any policy be wiser under these circumstances than that suggested by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his reply to Mr. Borden? Referring to the Admiralty Memorandum Sir Wilfrid said:—

"This document shows that there is no emergency, that England is in no danger, whether imminent or prospective. But the document discloses a condition of things, of which, indeed, we knew, but upon

which has now been placed the sanction of official correspondence. It shows that there has been going on in Europe for some years past a certain movement of affairs. The armament of the great powers has compelled England to alter the strategic lines which hitherto have been essential for her security. The document discloses the fact that, on account of this increased naval armament, England, in order to maintain her security in her own waters, has been obliged to withdraw some of her naval forces from the distant seas. This, I believe, is a fair statement of what is disclosed by the document laid upon the table by my right hon. friend. In the face of this position, I now ask the question: What is the duty of the House of Commons, what is the duty of the people of Canada?

* * *

"Let me state it again. As a result of the armaments which are now going on in Europe, England has been obliged to increase the margin of security which she relies on for her own defence, by reducing her naval forces in the outlying seas. Such is the condition; and, I ask once more, what is the remedy? In our humble judgment, the remedy is this, that wherever, in the distant seas, or in the distant countries—in Australia, Canada or elsewhere—a British ship has been removed to allow of concentration in European waters, that ship should be replaced by a ship built, maintained, equipped and manned by the young nation immediately concerned. If the young nations of the Empire take hold of the equipment and manning of ships to look after the distant seas, concentration can easily take place in the waters of Europe, and the British Admiralty knows what zones it has to defend. This is the Australian policy; this ought to be the Canadian policy.

* * *

"England never was wealthier than she is at the present time; her coffers are overflowing. What she wants are the hearts, the brains, and the brawn of her subjects all over the world. It has been stated—I hope it will prove true—that this generous contribution of $35,000,000 to the Imperial treasury will create a deep impression in Europe amongst the great powers. I hope it is true, but would not the impression be much greater yet if, instead of this money contribution, the nations of Europe were to see the young daughters of the Empire, the young nations scattered over the whole world, building fleets of their own, to use the language of the resolution of 1909, in co-operation with and in close relation to the Imperial navy, along the lines suggested by the Admiralty at the last Imperial Conference, and in full sympathy with the view that the naval supremacy of Great Britain is essential to the security of commerce, the safety of the Empire, and the peace of the world.

"Would not that create a greater impression? Many there are, and I am one of them, who deprecate the important fact that upon the distant seas they do not count as many pennants as they counted some few years ago, but let this policy be adopted, and then the full quota, which we saw at one time, of our ships on the distant seas, would be re-established, and the white ensign, which has been for so many centuries the symbol of England's naval pride, would again unfold itself on the seven seas. Then, Sir, we would see, besides the white ensign, the colours of the young nations themselves, attesting

the solidarity between mother and daughter. That is the policy which we adopted, that is the policy which we intend to follow." (*Hansard, House of Commons Debates, December 12, 1912.*)

Other Arguments from Memorandum for Canadian Fleet Units.

Section 7 of the Memorandum is **a further argument for the establishment of Canadian fleet units** to assist in the protection of the growing trade of Canada. The section contains the following:—

"The rapid expansion of Canadian sea-borne trade, and the immense value of Canadian cargoes always afloat in British and Canadian bottoms, here require consideration. On the basis of the figures supplied by the Board of Trade to the Imperial Conference of 1911, the annual value of the overseas trade of the Dominion of Canada in 1909-10 was not less than $72,000,000, and the tonnage of Canadian vessels was 717,000 tons, and these proportions have already increased and are still increasing. For the whole of this trade, wherever it may be about the distant waters of the world, as well as for the maintenance of her communications, both with Europe and Asia, Canada is dependent, and has always depended upon the Imperial Navy, without corresponding contribution or cost."

The last paragraph of **Section 7** is **a positive statement to the effect that not only does an emergency not exist, but that Britain, without courting disaster at home, can send an effective fleet of battleships and cruisers out of home waters to all parts of the Empire.** The paragraph is as follows:

"Further, *at the present time and in the immediate future, Great Britain still has the power*, by making special arrangements and mobilising a portion of the reserves, to send, *without courting disaster at home*, an effective fleet of battleships and cruisers to unite with the Royal *Australian Navy* and the British squadrons in China and the Pacific *for the defence of British Columbia*, Australia and New Zealand. And these communities are also protected and their interests safeguarded by the power and authority of Great Britain so long as her naval strength is unbroken."

Canada Dependent on Australia for Defence.

This section contains an interesting admission and one that surely discloses **the need for Canadian fleet units, unless the security and self respect of Canada is to be wholly forgotten.** In so many words, it states that British Columbia is dependent for its defence on the Royal Australian Navy, co-operating with an effective fleet of battleships and cruisers to be sent from England, and the British squadrons in China and the Pacific. It is worth re-reading.

"Further, at the present time and in the immediate future, Great Britain still has the power, by making special arrangements and mobilising a portion of the reserves, to send, without courting disaster at home, an effective fleet of battleships and cruisers *to unite with the Royal Australian Navy* and the British squadrons

in China and the Pacific *for the defence of British Columbia*, Australia and New Zealand."

Would it not be more befitting the dignity of the premier Dominion were the British Admiralty in a position to say that the **Royal Canadian Navy** might co-operate with other British squadrons in the defence of its own coasts, and, if need be, in the defence of Australia and New Zealand as well?

Section 8 is a statement that the naval power of Britain diminishes and increases with the increase or diminution respectively of the fleets of other countries. It concludes:—

"*Anything* which increases our margin in the newest ships diminishes the strain and augments our security and our chances of being left unmolested."

It is scarcely necessary to point out that **fleet units newly constructed would be composed of the newest ships,** and as such would diminish the strain and augment Britain's security and her chance of being left unmolested.

A preceding paragraph points out that larger margins of superiority at Home would, among other things, restore a greater freedom to the movements of the British Squadrons in every sea, and directly promote the security of the Dominions. It will be apparent that **fleet units which directly promote the security of the Dominions would also restore a greater freedom to the movement of the British Squadrons,** and, in this particular, would have the same effect as larger margins of superiority at Home.

The concluding Sections 9 and 10 are the ones, which, along with the reference to Canadian trade in Section 7, refer more particularly to Canada. They, therefore, deserve a more detailed analysis.

WHAT THE ADMIRALTY MEMORANDUM REALLY IMPLIES.

Section 9, if it means anything at all, means that **the British Government has experienced some disappointment at the apparent neglect, on the part of the Dominion, to proceed with the carrying out of the resolution of March, 1909,** under which the construction of a Canadian Naval Service was commenced. It expresses no opinion as to why, after a fair beginning had been made, the Dominion, for a year or more, at a time which the Prime Minister of Canada says is one of great emergency, should have failed to do anything in the way of helping to maintain the integrity of the Empire at sea, but states that whether the causes which have been operating to paralyse action shall continue or not, Great Britain, in any circumstances will not fail in her duty to the Overseas Dominions, also that the Admiralty are fully assured that His Majesty's Government will not hesitate to ask the House of Commons for whatever provision the circumstances of each year may require. It distinctly points out that it is **not so much the nature of what is done, as the doing of something which is likely to be of greatest service at the moment.** It implies that the unwillingness to do anything which has been so marked since the present Government assumed office has shaken confidence in the purpose of the

Dominion, and that the evidence of some renewed resolve is important.

The section in full is as follows:—

"Whatever may be the decision of Canada at the present juncture, Great Britain will not, in any circumstances, fail in her duty to the Dominions of the Crown.

"She has before now successfully made headway, alone and unaided, against the most formidable combinations, and *she has not lost her capacity* by a wise policy and strenuous exertions *to watch over and preserve the vital interests of the Empire.*

"The Admiralty are assured that His Majesty's Government will not hesitate to ask the House of Commons for whatever provision the circumstances of each year may require. *Any action on the part of Canada* to increase the power and mobility of the Imperial Navy and thus widen the margin of our common safety, would be recognized everywhere as a most significant witness to the united strength of the Empire and to *the renewed resolve* of the Overseas Dominions to take their part in maintaining its integrity."

What possible meaning can be attached to the words **"renewed resolve"** other than that **the resolve to which expression was given in the resolution of March, 1909, has, since the present Government assumed office, wholly failed of further execution?** Surely there is nothing in this section to warrant the departure from the policy of a Canadian Naval Service. Remembering the whole purport of the speech of the First Lord of the Admiralty at the Shipwright's Banquet, is there any action on the part of Canada, in view of existing circumstances, more likely to "increase the power and mobility of the Imperial Navy and thus widen the margin of our common safety" than that Canada should do what he describes as the important thing, namely, "fill up the gap" that has been occasioned by the withdrawal of the Atlantic and Pacific squadrons, so that, to quote his own words, "while we in the old country guard the decisive theatre, our comrades and brothers across the seas shall keep the flag flying on the oceans of the world?"

Mr. Borden Shown to Have Deliberately Restricted the Admiralty.

There remains, then, only **Section 10.** Does it imply a departure from this policy? Here is the Section in full—

"The Prime Minister of the Dominion, having enquired *in what form any immediate aid that Canada might give would be most effective*, we have no hesitation in answering, that after *a prolonged consideration of all the circumstances*, that it is desirable that *such aid should include* the provision of a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war which science can build or money supply."

What of the words "It is desirable that such aid should include the provision of a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war which science can build or money supply?" These words, it need hardly be said, imply **no preference what-**

ever as between a contribution of money or ships and the construction of fleet units.

A fleet unit consists of 1 armoured cruiser ("Dreadnought" type); 3 unarmoured cruisers ("Bristol" type); 6 destroyers; 3 submarines. The fact that in speaking of the aid it is desirable should be provided, the section makes use of the words **"should include"** in referring to the largest and strongest ships of war, would almost seem to imply that the Admiralty had in mind, **not the "exclusive" presentation of Dreadnoughts,** but rather the construction of **fleet units, which would necessarily "include" these largest and strongest ships of war.**

But there is something more significant than this in the section as it is worded, and the wording clearly is not without design. It will be noticed that the Admiralty does not say that under all circumstances it is desirable that the aid to be given should take the form here mentioned, but that **in answer to a specific question which is specifically limited in its nature,** the Admiralty gives the answer therein contained.

It is necessary at this point to consider **what was in Mr. Borden's mind when he went to England, and what it was which gave rise to the question which he put to the Admiralty,** and to which he requested an answer. Because of his compromise with the Nationalists. Mr. Borden was pledged not to adopt a permanent policy without appealing to the people. On the other hand, to satisfy the jingoes, he was obliged to do something. He was not anxious to make an appeal to the people and, therefore, when he went to England, **he did not go with a view of trying to arrange a permanent policy, but rather to find a means of escape from one.** He went to England to find or create an emergency which might help him out of his own difficulties. The real emergency was not any danger to British Supremacy on the high seas, but the situation as it had developed in his own cabinet, and that is the emergency which his present proposals are intended to meet.

What had Mr. Borden reason to believe would be the view of the Admiralty when he went to England? What possible view could he have expected them to have other than the one to which public expression had so freely and constantly been given? He knew very well that to ask, without any restriction one way or the other, what it was best to do in the matter of naval defence. the reply of the First Lord of the Admiralty would have been to lay special emphasis on what is contained in his own speech at the Shipwright's Dinner and which is in accord with the purpose of the unanimous resolution of March, 1909, and advise the bringing to completion, as soon as this could reasonably be effected, the fleet units on the Atlantic and Pacific in accordance with the permanent policy already decided upon.

But how different was Mr. Borden's action from that which the Admiralty and the British Government had reason to expect! No sooner had Mr. Borden landed in England than he made the public pronouncement that "any great Dominion undertaking to share upon a permanent basis in the sea defence of the Empire must have some voice in the policy which shapes the issue of war

or of peace, and that Canada did not propose to be merely an adjunct of even the British Empire."

This attitude he doubtless maintained in all his interviews with the British Ministers. In other words, he gave the Home Government, and in particular the Admiralty, to understand that until the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was prepared to abandon the doctrine of ministerial responsibility and to allow to Canada the right of helping to determine the foreign policy of England, Canada would absolutely refrain from adopting any permanent policy in the matter of Imperial Naval defence.

Is it any wonder that the British Ministry were somewhat surprised at this extraordinary demand? They had looked forward expectantly to the visit of Mr. Borden and his Ministers, anticipating a hearty co-operation in some permanent plan of Imperial naval defence. They were summarily told that nothing of the kind could be considered until Great Britain was prepared to make a radical change in constitutional practice, and to concede further rights to the Dominion. They had expected an acknowledgment of past obligations; they did not expect a demand for further privileges.

Under the circumstances, the British Admiralty and the British Government seem to have exhibited wonderful forbearance.

What Mr. Borden was told by the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Colonies in England with respect to obtaining a voice in foreign policy has become public in an official despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to H.R.H. the Governor-General, dated London, January 6th, and made public by Mr. Borden himself. Here are the words of the despatch:—

"Mr. Asquith and I had several conversations with him (Premier Borden) at which he expressed the desire that the Canadian and other Dominion Ministers who might be in London as members of the Committee of Imperial Defence, should receive in confidence knowledge of the policy and proceedings of the Imperial Government in foreign and other affairs. **We pointed out to him that the Committee of Imperial Defence is a purely advisory body and is not, and cannot, under any circumstances, become a body to decide on policy, which is, and must remain the sole prerogative of the Cabinet, subject to the support of the House of Commons."**

All consideration of anything in the nature of a permanent policy having been thus swept completely to one side, what was left? Section 10 gives us the answer:—

"The Prime Minister of the Dominion having enquired in what form any immediate aid that Canada might give would be most effective, we have no hesitation in answering that, after a prolonged consideration of all the circumstances, that it is desirable that such aid should include a provision for a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war which science can build ro money supply."

"After a prolonged consideration of all the circumstances." This sentence is rather significant. "All the circumstances." **What were all the circumstances?** We do not know all, but **one, at least, we know and that is, that nothing of a permanent nature would be done.** That in considering the aid that Canada might give, nothing which might have to do with a permanent policy could be considered until the question of Canada's right to participate in the shaping of the foreign policy of the United Kingdom had been determined. Besides, it was not left to the Admiralty to give a general opinion; **the Admiralty was asked to answer a specific question, restricted to form and immediate aid,** namely, "in what form any immediate aid" that Canada might give would be most effective.

Mr. Borden, in his speech on Dec. 5, 1912, makes it quite plain that this was all the Admiralty was asked. He said, "We have asked His Majesty's Government in what form temporary and immediate aid can best be given by Canada at this juncture."

Is it possible to conceive, having regard for the circumstances, of any other answer being made by the Admiralty? **The Admiralty was not even asked if immediate aid was necessary, or whether it was preferable to something of a permanent nature.** According to the question put, respecting which an answer as to form was requested, the aid had to be immediate, and of immediate aids that Canada might give, all connection with any permanent policy being completely ruled out, could any kind of aid have been thought of which, under the circumstances, would be at all likely to be effective, other than such aid as would include the provision for a certain number of the largest and strongest ships of war?

Does not the Admiralty statement, on the face of it, bear out the truth of what Sir Wilfrid said in commenting on Mr. Borden's proposal?

"It is a hybrid policy, it is a cross between jingoism and Nationalism.

* * *

"My right hon. friend did not go to England to consult the Admiralty about a policy. It is evident that when my right hon. friend went to England, he had abandoned the policy of a Canadian navy. He went to England—it is very clear from the last paragraph of the Memorandum—to ask what they would accept for immediate aid. In other words, he went to England to ask what England would accept in the case of an emergency, although there was no emergency."

WHAT GREAT BRITAIN REALLY WANTS.

It only remains to point out that what the Admiralty appears to lay the greatest emphasis on, is **not so much the form of aid given by Canada, as the moral effect of anything that may be done by the Dominion.**

Paragraph 1 of the Memorandum has the following:—

"The Admiralty set the greatest store by the important material, and *still more important moral, assistance* which it is within the power of Canada to give to maintaining British Naval

supremacy on the high seas, but they think it necessary to disclaim any intention, however indirect, of putting pressure upon Canadian public opinion, or of seeking to influence the Dominion Parliament in a decision which clearly belongs solely to Canada."

Paragraph 8 has the following:—

"*Anything* which increases our margin in the newest ships diminishes the strain and augments our security and our chances of being left unmolested."

Paragraph 9 has the following:—

"The Admiralty are assured that His Majesty's Government will not hesitate to ask the House of Commons for whatever provisions the circumstances of each year require. But the aid which Canada could give at the present time is not to be measured only in ships or money. *Any action on the part of Canada* to increase the power and mobility of the Imperial Navy, and thus widen the margin of our common safety, would be recognized everywhere as a most significant witness to the united strength of the Empire, and to the renewed resolve of the Overseas Dominions to take their part in maintaining its integrity."

THE MORAL EFFECT ALREADY MET, THE QUESTION OF METHOD REMAINS.

The main purpose, the moral assistance which Canada might render, has already been met by the Opposition agreeing to the amount proposed by the Government, namely, a vote of $35,000,000 toward naval construction; this is evidence sufficient of a united determination on the part of both political parties in the Canadian Parliament to incur a like expenditure on Naval defence with a view of assisting the Mother Country. *There can no longer be any doubt as to Canada assisting the Motherland.* This purpose, the only one to which the Home Government attaches any real importance, having been effected, *the question, so far as Canada is concerned, becomes now one of method only,* and this the Memorandum expressly states is *"a matter which clearly belongs solely to Canada"* and as to which the Memorandum itself expresses absolutely no preference.

It is, therefore, for the Parliament and people of Canada to decide whether the form to be taken shall be an immediate contribution of Dreadnoughts at a cost of $35,000,000 as part of a permanent policy of contribution, or in addition to a permanent policy or a Canadian Naval Service in accordance with the unanimous resolution of the House of Commons of March, 1909, The Admiralty Memorandum, rightly understood, should serve a useful purpose in rendering possible a decision as to which course is the most likely to prove of greatest benefit.

Copies of this pamphlet may be had on applying to the Central Liberal Information Office, Ottawa, Canada.

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